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MY ROSE.

H. P. SPOFFORD.

OVER my mantel hangs a rose—
Such a great red-hearted and dewy thing
That, though on the wild air drive the snows,
In my room dwells Summer with folded wing.

Some painter painted it in a dream
Of a haunted dell and a spicy night,
His pencil lit by the flying gleam
Of bloom and fragrance and all delight.

And I lie, when I look at this magic flower,
In a Persian garden and wait the morn,
While a bird, from starlit hour to hour,
Sings with his breast against a thorn.

DINNERS AND DINERS-OUT.

JUNIUS HENRI BROWNE.

ALL the world eats; but only the highest civilization dines. A good dinner, in the common sense, almost any larder may furnish: a good dinner, in a fine sense, requires courtesy, culture, character. A feast fit for the gods may be coarsened and made vulgar, as the humblest meal may be converted to nectar and ambrosia by the quality of its partakers.

Who sits at the board, more than the board itself, furnishes the entertainment. No wine so rich as the wine of speech; no sauce so savory as the sauce of sympathy. When we have found the diners, the dinner is easy of accomplishment.

This country is too new for fine dinners to be over-numerous. We are too prone, as yet, to think of dinner either as a necessity or a mere physical gratification. To render it at once a palatal luxury and a mental stimulant requires time and taste, insight and intellect. We are more inclined to lay stress upon the banquet than the banquets; and, when our balance at the banker's is large, we fancy we can play the host right royally. How often have we all eaten at groaning tables, and groaned, in turn, over the poverty of their richness! We had whatever money could supply; and yet we were hungry and athirst, mourning the absence of the spirit that transforms crusts into comfort, and from crumbs extracts companionship.

In the Old World, dining is a prominent part of the social economy. In St. Petersburg, Vienna, Paris and London, diplomacy finds many of its best advantages in the pleasures of the table. Wars, treaties, alliances, annexations, are arranged between the different courses, and over dessert and coffee the fate of nations is not seldom sealed. The way to men's weakness, if not to their hearts, lies through their mouths; and he who is obdurate and intractable at his potage, becomes pliable and yielding when the champagne has begun to circulate.

Even in this land, where we have few international questions to settle, dinners are constantly given as a means to an end; and the stranger bidden to a feast may well disbelieve that the motive of his bidding is disinterested. The happiness of your company, in many invitations, means the value of the service you are expected to render. Stubborn mortals, who have resisted every form of flattery and temptation, have succumbed to the material eloquence of a superb *cuisine*.

Beware of dinners from those who have secular ends in view; for, after you have partaken of their hospitality, to accommodate them seems like an obligation. We all recognize the breaking of bread and eating of salt together as involving something of responsibility. And yet, in these scheming and planning days, it is frequently the emptiest of forms and the hollowest of customs.

All such dinners are proletarian. To be free and fine, they must be given for themselves; have no purpose, either lower or higher, than the hospitality of the host and the satisfaction of the guests. So directed, it becomes incumbent upon each attendant to bestow the best of himself upon the company, and to sanctify the feast with the sincerity and price of his individuality.

In our great centers, these strictly social repasts are, every year, growing more and more into vogue. Our wealth, leisure and culture are so rapidly increasing that we naturally seek the means of stifling the hours elegantly, of connecting mind and matter by a bridge of solidity and grace. The art element is permeating our lives; and we are gratified to festoon our desires and appetites with all the attractions opulent taste and ingenious fancy can lend.

Nature and Fortune are inclined to be niggardly. They rarely give with full hands. What we have from one is denied by the other. The capacity to enjoy is granted to one, and the means of enjoyment to another. The man of wealth is rarely the man of wit; and he who can provide *pâté de foie gras* and Haut-Brion must look elsewhere for sparkling speech and the contagion of animation. Hence, there be dinner-givers and diners-out; and, strange as it may seem, the former are more numerous than the latter. Great wealth in money is quite common in this great metropolis; but great wealth in mind is inadequate to the demand. Diners-out have, for some reason, been decreasing of recent years, and many are the prosperous houses in which sumptuous viands are eaten in dreary silence or in unbecoming spirit.

This should not be; for, where rich repasts are spread, rich company should be assembled, and inward should answer to outward bounty. Wealth too often invites wealth; and so the table-talk is of sales and profits, bonds and mortgages, interests and investments. The hours that should be sacred to good-fellowship, independent of business and all its carking cares, are made a prosy repetition of the calendar and counting-house. They who would honor and grace the monotonous board are eating, solitary and alone, in some out-of-the-way corner, or flinging epigrams and repartees where they are too abundant to be appreciated.

Vast is the waste of the intellectual part of a good dinner in quarters least suspected. If but a tithe of this superfluity could be made available to Cræsus, he would no longer wonder why his Lafite and his Clicquot fail to inspire the much needed vivacity. By-and-by he will discover his lack, and, rising above his money-bags, will seek those whose capital is in their brains, and prevail upon them to honor him with their presence. Then his dinner will be what no art of the cook can make it—it will be girded by the halo of genuine sociability. The venison will have a new flavor, and the pines and oranges be fresh as on their native soil. There will be music in the contact of the fork and plate, and the dishes will be spiritualized by the charm of courtesies exchanged. When the dinners and the diners are conjoined, the triumph of mind and of matter will be complete.

Clever men of character have so much reason to be proud that they seldom accept favors offered as such. Where they go, they must be entirely welcome, and be able to feel, if there be condescension, that it must be on their side. They prefer plain fare in good company to costly banquets with dull people. Consequently, even when urged to visit the palace of Aladdin, they stay away, lest they may encounter the slave of the lamp. If, however, they are sure to meet there any of their spiritual peers, they will pardon the commonplace for the sake of the choice, and be pleased to shine with all their luster on the entertainment.

Aladdin has reached the secret of their action, and woos them to his feast in the name of their fellows. Aladdin's advantage has been such, by the introduction of the clever element, that he has been tempted to narrate his victory to others; and the result is that his palace has made the acquaintance of the legitimate princes who had long declined to cross the threshold. Plutus and Porphyrius are imitating his example, and, before another decade, the best of company may be encountered in the dwellings on which ducats have descended.

Fine dining, for generations a social art in the Old World, may now be considered to have become such with us, in spite of the national haste and excitability and restlessness. What America begins to do well, she soon does completely. Quiet and unpretending dinners, never surpassed in the European capitals for taste, fitness, harmony, and what might be termed the banquet of occasion, are daily given here with almost prandial perfection. Diners-out have grown to be an epicurean sect, and may be often seen in fashionable quarters obeying the summons of some auspicious host. They have correct palates; dress well; have good manners; talk nicely, and are, therefore, gratefully received wherever they are willing to go.

These professional diners-out are always amiable and entertaining; but they are prone to be tedious from their uniformity and tendency to routine.

The best diners-out are they who are spontaneous and not overborne by the need of preparation and the pressure of expectation. Like the gentle wind,

they go where they list, and tarry where they will. They hate too much formality; and, after the manner of wild flowers, exhale their sweetness regardless of time or place, yielding loyalty to nature from their love of nature. They are chary of their presence, and unwilling to be used as generous instruments to drown the small discords of the social orchestra. Wholly without prejudice, they are instinctively fond of what wealth and position may give, if wealth and position be employed for fine and lofty purposes. So, when bidden to the hospitable board by the voice of kindness and appreciation, they accept with pleasure, and carry with them the spirit of companionship and conviviality.

Some of our most elaborate dinners are altogether masculine, quite enough, in most cases, to insure their dullness from lack of variety and incentive. No dinner can be complete to which women are not admitted. Their presence is as necessary as instrumentation to the opera, or flowers to a garden. As there can be no true chorus without a soprano, there can be no festive Eden without an Eve. The brightest men are apt to grow vapid without feminine listeners, and common men tend to coarseness unchecked by their spiritualizing presence. Society, like Nature, pairs in sexes, and men and women always make the best of company. One sex invariably stimulates the other, and the most sluggish mind is roused when Beauty beams and Love, in the form of loveliness, both hears and heeds. Put him and her who are attuned to each other side by side at the plainest table, and out of the rude viands the magician, which their sympathy can create, will conjure Apician banquets. Dining is elevated into the poetry of the senses when every sense is called into play, and the heart and intellect perform the symphony.

The ideal banquets are those in which sensibility and soup, gallantry and fish, perfect breeding and perfectly cooked meats, humor and salads, bright talk and crystal ices, instinctive adaptation and luscious fruits, broad charity and rare wines combine to constitute the feast. Given the men and the women, the veriest bungler may make the table what Lucullus could not have made it without his chosen guests.

Dining alone or *en garçon* is a barbarism inexcusable in so advanced an age. Mankind was never half so civilized as now. All the graces should be honored, all the deities propitiated when we assemble around the evening board. All labor and, far as possible, all care should then be laid aside. One of the enlightened customs of Manhattan is to take the chief meal at a seemly hour. We deserve to be called metropolitans from the single fact that we forbear to eat a hearty luncheon at midday, and style it dinner, as is the habit of the provinces. We bring to our own dinner a sense of leisure and a possibility of repose, without which mere mastication and deglutition can never pass for a refined process of sustaining nature.

Dining-out relieves the monotony of existence; is an interlude between the solemn stanzas of the hymn of life. To interchange our tables is as beneficial as to interchange our thoughts. The domestic circle is pleasant; but its perpetual round waxes wearisome at last. All high natures need contact with many: to confine them to few begets selfishness and stagnation. The best houses we can visit are the houses where the heart is more bountiful than the purse, and where to dine means to get the best of the hospitality which good wishes and true sympathy can supply.

INDIAN ARROWS.—An arrow, shot from above, had entered his left shoulder, and penetrated to the ribs of the other side, and in pulling this shaft out a terrible feature of these weapons was illustrated. The flint-head, fastened to the shaft with a thong of deer-sinew, remains firmly attached while the binding is dry; but, as soon as it is moistened by the blood, the head becomes loose, and remains in the body after the arrow is withdrawn. The Apaches have several ways of producing terrible wounds; among others by firing bullets chipped from the half oxidized mats of old furnace-heaps containing copper and lead combined with sulphur and arsenic. But perhaps the worst at short range are produced by bullets made from the fibre of the aloe-root, which are almost always fatal, since it is impossible to clear the wound.—*Pumpelly's America and Asia*.